

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03350 051919Z

20

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7444

INFO NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION WASHDC

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NSF FOR OFFICE OF POLAR PORGRAMS

EO 11652 NA

TAGS TGEN OTRV CA

SUBJ VISIT TO ANTARCTICA - MR. RONALD IDE

REF OTTAWA 3233

1. EMBASSY SCICOUNS RECENTLY HAD OCCASION TO DISCUSS PROPOSED IDE TRAVEL TO ANTARCTICA WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS OF SCIENCE COUNCIL OF CANADA. AS DEPT AND NSF ARE AWARE, SCIENCE COUNCIL HAS LONG RECORD OF PRODUCING VALUABLE REPORTS DEALING WITH SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEMS. ON THE WHOLE THESE REPORTS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTIVE AND EVEN IN SOME SENSITIVE AREAS, E.G., REPORTS ON HIGH TECHNOLOGY AND ENERGY SUBJECTS, WHERE NATIONALISM AND SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS COULD EASILY HAVE MARRED THE REPORT AND CONTRIBUTED TO EXASPERBATION OF NATIONALISTIC THINKING, THE COUNCIL HAS OPTED FOR BALANCED, THOUGHTFUL REPORTING.

2. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE INDICATION THAT MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DRURY TO WHOM COUNCIL REPORTS MAY BE PLANNING TO ACCORD THE COUNCIL A MORE INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN CANADIAN SCIENCE POLICY DECISIONMAKING THAN HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY THE CASE. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE BECAUSE OF RECENT MAJOR SHAKEUP IN MSST.

3. ACCORDINGLY, BOTH BECAUSE OF THE INTRINSIC VALUE OF SCIENCE COUNCIL WORK AND BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE INCREASED INFLUENCE FOR THE COUNCIL, EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO RECOMMEND THAT DEPT AND NSF

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 03350 051919Z

CONSIDER IDE'S REQUEST FAVORABLY.

JOHNSON

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